SDG 16+
CIVIL SOCIETY
TOOLKIT

TAP
NETWORK
Transparency, Accountability &
Participation for 2030 Agenda

Leaving no one behind in SDG16+ engagement

Civil society can play a key role in leaving no one behind in SDG16+ engagement by focusing on vulnerable groups and supporting their empowerment and participation

Overview

The pledge to "leave no one behind" and to "endeavor to reach the furthest behind first" at are the heart of the 2030 Agenda.[44] They are also at the heart of many of the SDG16+ targets, especially those that seek to address exclusion and discrimination.[45] Population groups at risk of being left behind by SDG progress include women and girls, children, adolescents and youth, older people, people living in poverty, people in rural areas, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities, refugees and migrants, internally displaced and stateless persons, and gender and sexual minorities. In many cases, the groups that are the furthest behind experience multiple and intersecting disadvantages.[46]

Civil society actors can play a key role in leaving no one behind in SDG16+ implementation and accountability processes. Leaving no one behind in SDG16+ engagement means:

1. Ensuring a sufficient focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups in all SDG16+ implementation and accountability processes; and
2. Ensuring that the empowerment and meaningful participation of vulnerable and marginalized groups are central to efforts to achieve peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

Efforts to ensure that no one is left behind can advance the overall 2030 Agenda, as well as make a significant contribution to those SDG16+ targets focused on building inclusive societies.

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44   United Nations (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.* General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1, para. 4. Available at: https://sdgs. un.org/2030agenda

45   The Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies have identified 15 targets across the SDGs that are essential to achieve "inclusive societies". For more information, see: The Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies (2019). *The Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies: A Call to Action to Change our World.* Available at: https://www.sdg16.plus/roadmap

46   UNDP (2018). *What does it mean to leave no one behind? A UNDP discussion paper and framework for implementation,* p. 7. Available at: https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/what-does-it-mean-to-leave-no-one-behind-.html

Putting it into practice

There are a number of practical ways in which you can leave no one behind in your SDG16+ engagement, including the following:

1. **Planning** – Ensure that vulnerable and marginalized groups are both considered and consulted in your SDG16+ planning (e.g. your gap analysis, stakeholder analysis, stakeholder engagement plans, etc.). Consider who is being left behind by SDG16+ progress and why, based on factors such as discrimination, geography, governance, socio-economic status, and shocks and fragility.[47] Consult with vulnerable and marginalized groups about their concerns, priorities and aspirations for peace, justice and inclusion.[48]

2. **Awareness-raising** - Raise awareness of SDG16+ and the SDGs among vulnerable and marginalized groups, taking into account potential barriers to awareness-raising efforts such as language, access to and proficiency in digital technologies, accessibility issues, etc.

3. **Capacity building** – Support vulnerable and marginalized groups to engage in SDG16+ advocacy, implementation and accountability processes by building their capacity and supporting an enabling environment for their participation and empowerment. Ensure that strategies to build capacity are tailored to local contexts and priorities.[49]

4. **Participation** – Support the meaningful, inclusive and safe participation of vulnerable and marginalized groups in SDG16+ implementation and accountability processes by:

    a. Providing information on SDG16+ in local languages and accessible formats;

    b. Developing strategies to overcome the physical, financial, linguistic, logistical, technological, age, gender or other barriers to participation in SDG16+ processes, in consultation with vulnerable and marginalized groups;[50]

    c. Engaging with existing mechanisms, platforms or entities that represent specific vulnerable and marginalized groups (e.g. National Youth Councils);

    d. Establishing new mechanisms or platforms to support the engagement of vulnerable and marginalized groups in SDG16+ processes, in consultation with such groups;

    e. Identifying opportunities for vulnerable and marginalized groups to participate in national and local SDG16+ planning, budgeting and decision-making processes, as well as processes to follow-up and review SDG16+ at local, national and global levels;

    f. Facilitating regular engagement and dialogue between vulnerable and marginalized groups and key decision-makers and government officials;

    g. Using digital technologies and social media to amplify the voices of vulnerable and marginalized groups, taking into account the digital divide;[51]

    h. Conducting consultations and workshops – online and offline – with vulnerable and marginalized groups to assess SDG16+ progress for those furthest behind; and

    i. Advocating for and supporting the participation of vulnerable and marginalized groups in local and national government consultations on the SDGs, including Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).

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47   For detailed information on the key factors that should be assessed to understand who is being left behind and why, see: UNDP (2018). *What does it mean to leave no one behind? A UNDP discussion paper and framework for implementation*, pp. 3-4. Available at: https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/what-does-it-mean-to-leave-no-one-behind-.html

48   Saferworld (2019). "Time to invest: how to support action on SDG 16+", p. 6. Available at: https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1224-time-to-invest-how-to-support-action-on-sdg16

49   SDG 16+ Tunis Technical Consultation, March 2019, cited in: The Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies (2019). *Enabling the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through SDG 16+: Anchoring peace, justice and inclusion*, p. 62. Available at: https://www.un-globalalliance.org/sdg16-report

50   Transparency, Accountability and Participation (TAP) Network (2018). *SDG Accountability Handbook: A Practical Guide for Civil Society*, p 10. Available at: https://sdgaccountability.org/

51   The digital divide refers to the gap between demographics and regions that have access to modern information and communications technology – including telephone, television, personal computers and the Internet – and those that don't or have restricted access.

5. **Focusing on vulnerable and marginalized groups** – Ensure there is a sufficient focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups including in relation to:

   a. **Data** – Support the collection and use of disaggregated data on vulnerable and marginalized groups, including by: producing citizen-generated data that reflects grassroots communities and hidden populations; and monitoring progress on SDG16+ targets for vulnerable and marginalized groups.

   b. **Programming** – Ensure that civil society programs on achieving peace, justice and inclusion focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized groups.

   c. **Targets** – Advocate for the identification of national equity 'stepping stone' or interim targets for vulnerable and marginalized groups – in consultation with such groups – in order to track SDG16+ progress for those furthest behind.[52]

   d. **National policies, plans, strategies and budgets** – Advocate for national policies, plans, strategies and budgets for SDG16+ implementation to address the situation, needs and rights of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

   e. **Reporting on SDG16+ progress** – Work to ensure that both government reports and non-government spotlight or shadow reports on SDG16+ implementation address the progress of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

CASE STUDY:
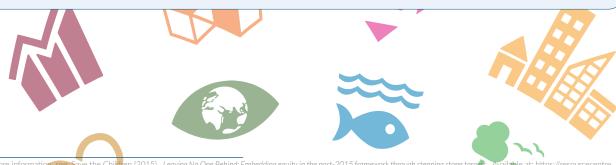
Empowering Indigenous Women in Mexico to Access Information and Unite Their Communities

ARTICLE 19

In 2002, the Government of Mexico created the Freedom of Information Act that enables citizens to demand information from public authorities and obligates the authorities to disclose proactively information of public interest (SDG target 16.10). ARTICLE 19 Mexico (Articulo 19) and the El Colectivo Feminista la Casa de la Mujer Ixim Antsetic applied this citizens' right to information to start a ground-based project with the women of Indigenous communities in the northern jungle of Chiapas. The project taught the women how to request relevant information about their medical services to improve healthcare in their communities, ultimately empowering them to protect their communities and children and to become more involved in decision-making and participatory processes that historically had only included men.

To read the full-length version of this case study, visit www.sdg16toolkit.org/case-studies

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52   For more information, see: Save the Children (2015). *Leaving No One Behind: Embedding equity in the post-2015 framework through stepping stone targets*. Available at: https://resourcecentre. savethechildren.net/library/leaving-no-one-behind-embedding-equity-post-2015-framework-through-stepping-stone-targets#:~:text=Stepping%20stone%20targets%20are%20 interim,are%20catching%20up%20with%20more; and UNDP (2018). *What does it mean to leave no one behind? A UNDP discussion paper and framework for implementation*, p. 27. Available at: https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/what-does-it-mean-to-leave-no-one-behind-.html

CASE STUDY:

Amplifying the Voices of People Living with Disabilities for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda

Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development (CSCSD)

Between April and June 2020, Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development (CSCSD) conducted a grass-roots spotlight interview and focus group discussions with people living with disabilities in Nigeria. This aimed to gauge their opinions on how the SDGs have affected them and to elicit information on their expectations for the Government of Nigeria, to inform policy decision-making that affects people living with disabilities. CSCSD organized two physical workshops, one in Ibadan and one in Lagos, to complete a spotlight report on people with disabilities, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. A Spotlight Report was produced for the 2020 Voluntary National Review (VNR) of Nigeria and featured during the 2020 United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

To read the full-length version of this case study, visit www.sdg16toolkit.org/case-studies

Key resources:

What does it mean to leave no one behind? A UNDP discussion paper and framework for implementation (UNDP, 2018)	This paper provides a framework that governments and stakeholders can use to take action to leave no one behind in a way that enables and accelerates progress to achieve the SDGs. It identifies five factors that are key to understanding who is being left behind and why, and discusses how these factors can be applied. **Available at: https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/what-does-it-mean-to-leave-no-one-behind-.html**
What is Good Practice? A framework to analyse the Quality of Stakeholder Engagement in implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda (UN DESA and UNDP, 2020)	This resource provides an analytical framework and tool to enable governments and other stakeholders to examine and strengthen the quality of their stakeholder engagement practices. It is based on a matrix of three key principles – inclusiveness (non-discrimination and accessibility), participation (access to information and influence in decision-making) and accountability (transparency and responsiveness). **Available at: https://www.sdg16hub.org/topic/what-good-practice-framework-analyse-quality-stakeholder-engagement-implementation-and-follow**
Stakeholder Engagement and the 2030 Agenda: A Practical Guide (UN DESA and UNITAR, 2020)	This publication adapts the content of an e-learning course developed by UN DESA and UNITAR and is designed for government officials and stakeholders interested in enhancing participation and inclusion in the implementation and follow up of the 2030 Agenda at all levels. It contains key information about participatory approaches in SDG implementation and provides concrete tools and methods. **Available at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/StakeholdersGuide**
Rome Youth Call-to-Action: Promoting and supporting youth-inclusive and youth-led SDG16 implementation, monitoring and accountability (UNDP 16x16 Initiative, 2019)	This call to action, developed by young people and presented at the Rome Conference on SDG 16 in preparation for the 2019 HLPF, provides key recommendations in five priority areas: i) peaceful societies; ii) just societies; iii) inclusive societies; iv) youth meaningful participation in SDG 16 monitoring, review, follow-up and accountability; and v) equal partnerships and financing (linkages with SDG17). It urges all stakeholders to take bold and strong action on SDG 16 and empower young people. **Available at: https://www.youth4peace.info/basic-page/rome-youth-call-action-sdg16**